

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

5 1. (currently amended) In a data processing environment, a method for synchronizing multiple data sets, the method comprising:

 establishing a data repository for facilitating synchronization of user information maintained among more than two data sets, said data repository storing user information that is a super-set of all user information for which any user desires synchronization support;

10 storing at least one mapping which specifies how user information may be transformed for storage at a given data set;

 receiving a request for synchronizing at least one data set;

 based on user information stored at said at least one data set and based on said at least one mapping, propagating to the data repository from ~~[[each-of-at]]~~ said at least one
15 data set any changes made to the user information, to the extent that such changes can be reconciled with user information already present at said data repository; and

 based on user information stored at said data repository and based on said at least one mapping, propagating to ~~[[each-of]]~~ said at least one data set any changes to the user information which have been propagated to the data repository, to the extent that such
20 changes are not present at said ~~[[each]]~~ at least one data set.

 2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of propagating to the data repository comprises:

 performing selected operations of adding, updating, and deleting information at the data repository, so that the data repository reflects changes made to user information at
25 the data sets.

3. (original) The method of claim 2, wherein said operation of deleting information comprises a logical delete operation of marking information as having been deleted.

4. (canceled)

5. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said data repository and said at least one mapping comprise a grand unification database, for facilitating synchronization among multiple data sets.

6. (original) The method of claim 5, wherein one grand unification database is created for each type of user information which is to be synchronized.

7. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein said environment includes types of user information selected from contact, calendar, and task-oriented information.

8. (canceled)

9. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein each data set comprises a plurality of data records, and wherein each data record is represented within the data repository.

10. (original) The method of claim 9, wherein each of said data records is represented within the data repository by a corresponding data record having a unique identifier.

11. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein each mapping comprises a mapping table storing a plurality of mapping entries, each mapping entry storing at least a first identifier for indicating a particular data record in the data repository which the entry is associated with, and a second identifier for indicating a particular data record at a particular data set which is the source for the user information.

12. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein each mapping table is associated with a particular data set.

13. (original) The method of claim 11, wherein each mapping entry stores particular information useful for determining when its associated user information was last modified.

14. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein said particular information comprises a last-modified time stamp, derived at least in part from the client device where the associated user information was last modified.

15. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein said particular information comprises a checksum value, for use with a data set residing at a client device that does not support time stamps.

16. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of propagating to each of said at least one data set comprises:

performing selected operations of adding, updating, and deleting information at each of said at least one data set, so that said each reflects changes made to user information at other data sets.

17. (original) The method of claim 16, wherein said operation of deleting information comprises physically deleting information at said each data set.

18. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the said data sets functions, at least in part, as said data repository.

19. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein user information is stored at the data repository as unformatted blob data.

20. (original) The method of claim 19, further comprising:
providing at least one type module for facilitating interpretation of user information stored as unformatted blob data at the data repository.

21. - 40. (canceled).